

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-15 (canceled)

Claim 16 (currently amended): ~~The filter according to claim 15~~ A filter comprising first and second axially spaced end caps, said second end cap having an axial flow opening therethrough, filter media extending axially between said end caps and extending in a closed-loop around a perimeter defining a hollow interior communicating with said axial flow opening, wherein fluid to be filtered  
5 flows laterally through said filter media and axially through said hollow interior and said axial flow opening, a pair of columns extending axially in said hollow interior between said end caps and laterally spaced from said axial flow opening on laterally distally opposite sides thereof and in non-circumscribing relation therewith, each column having a hollow sub-interior for receiving a  
10 respective post extending axially thereinto from a base for mounting the filter to the base, the posts applying axial compression force between said end caps on laterally distally opposite sides of said axial flow opening, said columns supporting said axial compression force on laterally distally opposite sides of said axial flow opening, wherein a first of said columns comprises first and second sleeves extending respectively from said first and second end caps axially towards and engaging  
15 each other and supporting said axial compression force, and the second of said columns comprises third and fourth sleeves extending respectively from said first and second end caps axially towards and engaging each other and supporting said axial compression force, wherein said first and second sleeves engage each other in axially overlapped telescoped non-threaded axially slidable relation, one of said first and second sleeves having a first annular sealing bead engaging the other of said first and second sleeves in axially slidable sealing relation providing an axially slidable seal sealing  
20 said sub-interior of said first column within said first and second sleeves from said hollow interior of said filter media to block contaminant flow therebetween, and wherein said third and fourth

sleeves engage each other in axially overlapped telescoped non-threaded axially slidable relation, one of said third and fourth sleeves having a second annular sealing bead engaging the other of said third and fourth sleeves in axially slidable sealing relation providing an axially slidable seal sealing  
25 said sub-interior of said second column within said third and fourth sleeves from said interior of said filter media to block contaminant flow therebetween, wherein said filter media has an axial height between said first and second axial ends at respective said first and second end caps, and wherein each of said first, second, third and fourth sleeves has an axial height less than said axial height of said filter media.

Claim 17 (currently amended): The filter according to claim 16 wherein said one of said first and second sleeves has a first stop engaging the other of said first and second sleeves and stopping axial travel of said first and second sleeves toward each other, to provide said first column support for said axial compression force, and wherein one of said third and fourth sleeves has a second stop  
5 engaging the other of said third and fourth sleeves and stopping axial travel of said third and fourth sleeves toward each other, to provide said second column support for said axial compression force, wherein said first stop engaging said other of said first and second sleeves is spaced axially between said first and second axial ends of said filter media, and said second stop engaging said other of said third and fourth sleeves is spaced axially between said first and second axial ends of said filter  
10 media.

Claim 18 (currently amended): The filter according to claim ~~14~~ 16 wherein said hollow interior of said filter media and said axial flow opening in said second end cap are in axial alignment, and wherein said ~~post is~~ posts are laterally spaced from said axial flow opening and axially non-aligned therewith and offset therefrom.

Claim 19 (currently amended): The filter according to claim ~~14~~ 16 comprising a pair of seals, each provided by a respective annular sealing bead around a respective said sleeve at a respective one of

5 said columns and sealing the respective said sub-interior of the respective said column from said  
interior of said filter media to block contaminant flow therebetween, a first of said seals being  
between said first and second sleeves, a second of said seals being between said third and fourth  
sleeves, wherein each of said first and second seals is laterally spaced from said axial flow opening  
in non-circumscribing relation, and wherein said first and second seals are laterally spaced from  
each other on laterally distally opposite sides of said axial flow opening, wherein a first of said seals  
is located on a first of said columns in circumscribing relation thereto and in non-circumscribing  
10 relation to said axial flow opening, and a second of said seals is located on a second of said columns  
in circumscribing relation thereto and in non-circumscribing relation to said axial flow opening.

Claim 20 (currently amended): The filter according to claim ~~13~~ 16 wherein said hollow interior of  
said filter media and said axial flow opening in said second end cap are in axial alignment, and  
wherein a first of said posts is laterally spaced from said axial flow opening and axially non-aligned  
therewith and offset therefrom, and a second of said posts is laterally spaced from said axial flow  
5 opening and axially non-aligned therewith and offset therefrom and also laterally spaced from said  
first post and axially non-aligned therewith and offset therefrom.